

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 173834

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ORIGIN EA-09

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR, VN, US

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING RE VIETNAM

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF PORTION OF DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S
NOON BRIEFING JULY 13 REGARDING VIETNAM:

2. (BEGIN TEXT) Q. WELL, BOB, COULD YOU TELL US ANYTHING
ABOUT A STATEMENT BY THE VIETNAMESE VICE FOREIGN MINISTER
PHAM HIEN IN MANILA TODAY THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD PRO-
POSED FURTHER TALKS WITH HANOI OVER THE RETURN OF MISSING
U.S. SERVICEMEN IN VIETNAM?

A. AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE CONFIRMED HERE THAT WE HAVE BEEN
INVOLVED IN AN ONGOING EXCHANGE OF MESSAGES WITH THE VIET-
NAMESE. WE HAVE NOT CHARACTERIZED THEM BEYOND SAYING THAT
OUR PRINCIPAL CONCERN REMAINS OBTAINING AN ACCOUNTING OF
OUR MISSING-IN-ACTION AND A RETURN OF THE REMAINS OF THE
DEAD. AND I RECALL THAT THE SECRETARY HAS SAID THAT WITH-
OUT A RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE, PROGRESS ON IMPROVED RELA-
TIONS WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE.

Q. WHAT IS THE STATE OF THE ONGOING EXCHANGE?

A. I AM NOT ABLE TO CHARACTERIZE IT BEYOND CONFIRMING THAT
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PAGE 02 STATE 173834

WE ARE HAVING EXCHANGES WITH THEM AND RESTATING WHAT OUR

PRINCIPAL CONCERN IS.

Q. WHEN WAS THE LAST ONGOING EXCHANGE GOING ON?

A. I DO NOT KNOW WHEN WE HAD OUR LAST EXCHANGE.

Q. BOB, ARE THERE ANY PLANS TO SEND A DELEGATION TO HANOI
OR ELSEWHERE TO MEET WITH THE VIETNAMESE?

A. I DO NOT KNOW.

Q. YOU DON'T KNOW?

A. I DO NOT.

Q. COULD YOU CHECK?

A. I WILL CHECK INTO IT.

Q. WAS THERE ANY CONTACT WITH THE NORTH VIETNAMESE IN
MANILA?

A. NO.

Q. BOB, ON ANOTHER SUBJECT --

Q. ONE MORE QUESTION ON THIS ONE. HOW ARE THESE EXCHANGES
BEING CARRIED OUT, BOB?

A. I BELIEVE THEY ARE BEING CARRIED OUT THROUGH OUR EMBASSY
IN PARIS.

Q. BUT, IN OTHER WORDS, HIS STATEMENT -- THAT THE UNITED
STATES HAS PROPOSED FURTHER TALKS -- IS INCORRECT?

A. I HAVE NOT --

Q. HE'S A RATHER POSITIVE ONE ON THIS IN FBIS.

A. YES.

Q. HE REPEATS THAT.

A. YES. I AM JUST ABLE TO CONFIRM WHAT I HAVE SAID, AND
I CANNOT REALLY GO BEYOND THAT.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON HANOI'S DECISION TO ESTABLISH
RELATIONS WITH TWO COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE BEEN FRIENDLY WITH
THE UNITED STATES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA?

A. NO. I DO NOT HAVE ANY COMMENT.

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PAGE 03 STATE 173834

(END TEXT). KISSINGER

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